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ABSTRACT

The applicability of socialization theory for understanding the processes of college impacts on students is discussed. The focus is affective dimensions of college impact, particularly influences of college on student's values, personal goals, and aspirations. Conceptual dimensions of the socialization process are considered, with attention to characteristics of individuals and institutions that are likely to enhance the influence of college on students. A conceptual framework for understanding the undergraduate socialization process is presented that incorporates socializing influences experienced by undergraduates from a variety of sources, both within and external to the postsecondary institution. Included in the framework are the socializing impacts of: student background, the normative influences exerted by the academic and social structure of the college through interpersonal and intrapersonal processes, and the mediating impacts of both parental socialization and noncollege reference groups during college. Special emphasis is placed on social structural aspects of socialization, rather than on individual processes dealing with socializing influences. A total of 155 references is included. (SW)

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# UNDERGRADUATE SOCIALIZATION*

by

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held at the Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel in Baltimore, Maryland, November 21-24, 1987. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with the research of higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

There has been a continuing interest in the study of the ways in which colleges affect the lives of their students, during the years of enrollment (Newcomb, 1943; Jacob, 1957; Sanford, 1962; Chickering, 1969; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Trow, 1975; Astin, 1977; Pace, 1979; Chickering & Associates, 1981; Komarovsky, 1985; Katchadourian & Boli, 1985) as well as the years beyond college (Newcomb, et al, 1967; Withey, 1971; Solmon & Taubman, 1973; Hyman, Wright, & Reed, 1975; Bowen, 1977; Winter, McClelland, & Stewart, 1981). The primary focus of the bulk of these works has been on identifying individual outcomes, both cognitive and affective, that can be attributed to college attendance. While sometimes exhaustive in their treatment of research on college impact (e.g., Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Astin, 1977), most of these works tend to focus on description of outcomes and do not deal explicitly with the development of theoretical explanations for their occurrence or the building of conceptual frameworks.

This pattern has continued into the current decade. In their systematic classification of research on college students during the period from 1969 to 1983, Kuh, et al. (1986) found that only 10.8 percent of the articles published annually had a primary emphasis on theory development (i.e., establishing "causal relationships among sets of variables"). A mere 6.6 percent of the articles published annually dealt with concept integration (i.e., the production of "new knowledge about college students through analysis and integration of existing ideas"). These authors suggest that researchers have become comfortable with the extant models of student development (e.g., Chickering, 1969) and that the difficulties of building new theoretical models outweigh the efficacy of relying on models that are already widely accepted.

The purpose of the present chapter is to extend the body of research and thought on college impact by developing a conceptual framework for understanding some of its salient elements. The background section identifies important sets of variables appearing in some of the more influential contemporary research on college impact. It is argued that this work, while specifying important variables and testing causal relationships among variables, could be more oriented toward theoretically explicating the underlying processes of college impact on student outcomes.

In the next section, socialization theory, especially as reflected in late adolescence and early adulthood (e.g., Brim & Wheeler, 1966; Mortimer & Simmons, 1978) is suggested as a unifying schema for understanding the processes of college impacts on students. Because an extensive review of the cognitive dimensions of college impact has already been written (Pascarella, 1985a), this section is concerned primarily with affective dimensions of college impact, especially influences of college on students' values, personal goals, and aspirations. Important conceptual dimensions of the socialization process are discussed, paying particular attention to those characteristics of both individuals and institutions that are likely to enhance the influence of college on students.

A conceptual framework for understanding the undergraduate socialization process is developed in the third section of this chapter. The framework incorporates consideration of socializing influences experienced by undergraduates from a variety of sources, both within and external to the postsecondary educational institution. Particular emphasis is placed on social structural aspects of socialization, rather than on individual processes of dealing with socializing influences, not because the latter are any less

important but because they are not under the control of post-secondary educational institutions and, hence, are not as "policy-relevant." More interpretive perspectives would focus more on the individual student's perceptions of the college environment (Huber, 1980) and less on structural aspects of socialization. Attention is also paid to special student populations (e.g., women, minorities, and retiring adults). The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of this conceptual framework for future research, for the design of collegiate institutions as agencies of socialization, and for students seeking to make informed choices about the types of colleges that are most appropriate for them.

## BACKGROUND

Contemporary research on college impact has tended to draw upon conceptual frameworks (e.g., Chickering, 1969; Tinto, 1975; Astin, 1977; Weidman, 1984; Smart, 1986; and Smart & Pascarella, 1986) that include at least four general sets of variables: 1) student background characteristics; 2) college characteristics; 3) measures of students' linkages to the college environment; and 4) indicators of "college effects." The first set of variables, students' background characteristics when they enter college, includes, for example: a) social status indicators such as parental income and education, sex, and race; b) ability and achievement indicators such as test scores and high school class rank; and c) indicators of personal orientations such as career choices, values, goals, and aspirations prior to matriculation.

Characteristics of the collegiate environment experienced by students can be exemplified by: a) organizational variables such as type of control, size, and quality; b) indicators of the academic environment such as curricular emphases, the student's major, and expectations held by faculty for

of college impact.

This sort of approach does little, however, to clarify and explain in any systematic fashion the reasons why effects occur. Authors seldom develop and adequately operationalize a conceptual framework to explain the relationships among the variables. Rather, they rely on either intuitive use of "post hoc" conceptual frameworks or on reference to personal experience.

An intuitive approach provides a convenient opportunity for researchers to build an agenda for future research since explanations tend to incorporate unmeasured variables that are posited to be necessary for a fuller understanding of the college effects under investigation. It does not, however, necessarily lead to a systematic understanding of the underlying social processes that bring about college impact. If knowledge of how colleges influence their students is to be extended, researchers on college impact should begin to pay closer attention to identifying and operationalizing the specific social and interpersonal mechanisms that transmit and mediate the influences of the college environment. These conceptual variables can then guide empirical research.

In the next section of the chapter, several specific conceptual dimensions of the socialization process that are especially important for explaining college impact are discussed. These dimensions are then used, in the subsequent section, to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding undergraduate socialization.

## The Socialization Process

Brim defines socialization as "the process by which persons acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that make them more or less effective members of their society" (1966, p. 3). While society may be viewed as a

generalized social structure within which people behave, it can also be thought of as being composed of groups, "each having a distinct subculture" (Clausen, 1968, p. 4). Hence, socialization involves the acquisition of membership in salient groups (e.g., occupational or professional groups) as well as society at large. Consequently, socialization can always usefully be considered from the perspective of the society (or its constituent groups) as well as the individual. In order to understand socialization more clearly, it is important to identify social patterns of influence affecting individuals and groups. This is done in the next part of this chapter by focusing on the part played by social relationships in the establishment and maintenance of norms and group integration. The dimensions of general socialization theory are extended to the specific context of undergraduate socialization.

Norms and Social Integration

From the societal perspective, "socialization efforts are designed to lead the new member to adhere to the norms of the larger society or of the particular group into which he is being incorporated and to commit him to its future" (Clausen, 1968, p. 6). Norms are important for understanding the process of socialization because, according to Hawkes (1978, p. 888), " a norm may be conceived loosely as a rule, a standard, or a prescription for behavior . . . that is in some way enforced . . . ." Norms provide the basic standards for the regulations of individual behavior in groups as well as in the larger society (Hawkes, 1978, p. 888). Social integration, from this perspective, refers to the extent to which the society or sub-unit (e.g., institution, organization, group, etc.) is characterized by a shared acceptance of common norms that are reflected in solidary, cohesive, and reasonably stable patterns of relationships among its constituent parts (Parsons, Shils, & Olds, 1951,

pp. 202-204).

From the perspective of the individual, socialization involves learning the appropriate (i.e., normative) modes of "social behavior and /or role enactment" within the groups in which membership is desired (Mortimer & Simmons, 1978, p. 422). Role, in this sense, refers to the "dynamic aspects" (Linton, 1936, p. 14) of positions or statuses in the group, "and may be defined by the expectations (the rights, privileges, and obligations) to which any incumbent of the role must adhere" (Getzels, 1963, p. 311). Social integration, from the perspective of the individual, refers to the extent to which an individual's behavior in groups is characterized by willing acceptance of group norms and solidary relationships with other members. In terms of socialization, the more fully integrated an individual is into a group, the greater is that group's capacity for assuring a reasonably high level of normative compliance among members.

This is not to say, however, that socialization is a completely deterministic process over which the individual being socialized has little or no control. On the contrary, as individuals mature and move toward the assumption of adult roles, there can be considerable flexibility both in the expectations held of new role incumbents and in the variety of ways in which roles may be fulfilled acceptably (Mortimer & Simmons, 1978, p. 424). Futhermore, as individuals move toward adulthood, participation in the settings in which socialization occurs tends to be increasingly voluntary. Hence, individuals who do not find the normative expectations in a setting to their liking may attempt to seek other settings which are more commensurate with personal orientations.

## Reference Groups and Social Relationships

An important step in understanding undergraduate socialization is to identify those sources of influences that are likely to be the most salient for particular students. Reference group theory is especially useful for identifying potentially important sources of socializing influences. According to Kemper (1968, p. 32) a reference group can be a person, group, or collectivity that an individual takes into account when selecting a particular course of action from among several alternatives or "in making a judgement about a problematic issue."

A particularly salient social mechanism for the transmission and processing of socializing influences in reference groups is interpersonal relationships, especially, but not limited to, those which involve close friendships (Shibutani, 1955, p. 568). According to Brim (1966, p. 9), this process can be described as follows: "the individual learns the behavior appropriate to his position in a group through interaction with others who hold normative beliefs about what his role should be, and who reward or punish him for correct or incorrect actions."

## Anticipatory Socialization

General pressures of at least two sorts operate simultaneously during college. First, students frequently have to make choices concerning their activities after completion of college. Second, students need to identify and then to prepare for attaining desirable goals. This process is called "anticipatory socialization," i.e., " . . . the acquisition of values and orientations found in statuses and groups in which one is not yet engaged but which one is likely to enter . . ." (Merton, 1968, pp. 438-439). Anticipatory socialization prepares individuals for future positions, although much of the preparation is, according to Merton (1968, p. 439), "implicit, unwitting, and

informal."

For many undergraduates, one of the main tasks during college is to make decisions (some certainly more tentative than others) about the type of career or career preparation to pursue upon graduation. Students attempt to deter-mine not only their own suitability for various occupations (both in terms of academic skills and perceived job demands) but also the reactions of significant others to their choices. Colleges, in addition to providing the education and credentials necessary for access to professional, managerial, and upper white-collar occupations, also provide experiences and resources for students to develop more generalized orientations toward work and leisure activities. In this sense, the undergraduate college serves as a context for anticipatory occupational socialization involving the concomitant influences of students' values and occupational aspirations because, according to Rosenberg (1957, p. 24), "in addition to people choosing an occupation in order to satisfy a value, they may choose a value because they consider it appropriate for the occupational status they expect to fill in the future." The choice of an academic major is a central component of this process.

Temporal Aspects of Socialization

These processes of socialization do not apply only to the late adolescence/early adulthood period of life that is characteristic of most undergraduates. Socialization is considered to be a lifelong process that occurs as individuals adapt themselves to a variety of changing circumstances (Bragg, 1976, p. 6), not the least of which are changes in career demands, family responsibilities, and possibly even the employment structure. There are differences, however, in the basic content of socialization (ranging from the regulation of biological drives to specific group norms), the contexts in

which socialization occurs (ranging from the dependent status of the child to the organizational settings of adulthood), and the responses of individuals (ranging from the very malleable child to the change-resistant adult) to socializing influences (Mortimer & Simmons, 1978, p. 423). During college, the passage of four years in the life of a late adolescent can result in considerable maturation that may influence receptivity to socialization influences. In fact, going through college as a late adolescent has been shown to have several similarities to a "rite of passage" (Tinto, 1987; Van Gennep, 1960; Kett, 1977). Collegiate institutions are, however, enrolling increasing numbers of undergraduates who are not late adolescents but "non-traditional," adult students who have a very different adaptation to make, including things like juggling family demands or financial exigencies (Bean & Metzner, 1985; Weidman and White, 1985; Metzner & Bean, forthcoming). They also tend to have much clearer personal and career goals than late adolescent undergraduate. Hence, studies of undergraduate socialization should take into account differences in the age and developmental stages of students.

A second consideration has to do with the duration of influence. Curtis (1974) has shown, for instance, that the socialization potential of an educational institution increases with the amount of time that a student spends enrolled. The sequential nature of certain types of socialization processes is also important. As formulated by Thornton & Nardi (1975), taking on a role can be described as moving through four stages: anticipatory, formal, informal, and personal. In each stage, there is "interaction between individuals and external expectations, including individuals' attempts to influence the expectations of others as well as others' attempts to influence individuals" (Thornton & Nardi, 1975, p. 873).

The first of these stages corresponds to anticipatory socialization. The formal stage occurs when the individual begins to assume the specific demands of the role, meeting the group's official or proclaimed expectations of the role. The informal stage occurs when the individual learns the unofficial or informal expectations for the role and adapts behavior accordingly. In the personal stage, the individual reconciles the formal and informal expectations with personal orientations, assumes full membership in the group, and begins to participate in the group's processes of shaping the expectations that will be held subsequently for new role incumbents.

Summary

Three components of the socialization process are particularly salient for the study of college impact: 1) individual, group, and organizational sources of socializing influences; 2) social processes (both inter- and intrapersonal interaction, social integration) through which these sources of socializing influences are encountered and responded to by students; and 3) resultant socialization outcomes in various college settings. This approach to understanding undergraduate socialization suggests two basic questions about the socialization of individuals in an organizational environment. One pertains to social interaction: What are the interpersonal processes through which individuals are socialized? The other pertains to organizational structure: What are the various characteristics of higher education institutions as socializing organizations that exert influences on students? The importance of considering both individual and organizational characteristics in studying socialization can be explained as follows: "Just as individuals may become differently socialized because of differences in past experience, motivations, and capacities, so may they become differently socialized because

of differences in the structure of the social settings in which they interact" (Wheeler, 1966, p. 54).

The essence of this approach as it applies to the relationships among individual and organizational variables in the study of undergraduate socialization can be summarized as follows: Just as students differ in their patterns of interaction and personal orientations upon entrance, colleges differ in their structuring, intentionally or not, of both normative contexts such as student residences and classrooms, and of opportunities for social interaction among college students, faculty, and staff. Furthermore, because socialization occurs over a period of time and is a cumulative process, the relative importance of both settings and significant others may change during the course of the undergraduate years. Hence, it is essential that conceptualizations of undergraduate socialization incorporate the longitudinal aspects of change and stability over four (and often more) years.

The following sections of this chapter elaborate a conceptual framework and apply it to different aspects of undergraduate socialization, including the special problems of women, minorities, and non-traditional students. They also address the likelihood that various aspects of undergraduate socialization persist through the life course.

## Undergraduate Socialization: A Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework developed for this chapter. The framework is intended to contribute to theoretical understanding of collegiate impact and, more generally, to understanding of socialization in organizations. Underlying this framework, on one level, are concerns for the situational and individual developmental constraints on the choices made by

participants in an organizational environment. On another level, the framework explores a set of socialization processes, concentrating largely on the impact of normative contexts and interpersonal relations among an organization's members. It includes consideration of the joint socializing impacts of 1) student background, 2) the normative influences exerted by the academic and social structure of the college through the mechanisms of both inter- and intra-personal processes, and 3) the mediating impacts of both parental socialization and non-college reference groups during college despite influences brought to bear upon students by participation in the more immediate campus social structure.

The framework is not, however, intended to be exhaustive. Dimensions and variables other than those which appear could be included, depending upon the particular interests of researchers. The framework is based primarily upon the author's own research (Weidman, 1984; Weidman & Friedmann, 1984; Weidman & White, 1985) as well as the conceptual work of Chickering (1969), Tinto (1975, 1987), and Astin (1977, 1984).

Briefly, the model was designed with several general considerations in mind. As has already been mentioned, it is concerned primarily with non-cognitive SOCIALIZATION OUTCOMES. Of considerable importance among these outcomes is career choice, a process which involves not simply the selection of a career field but also an assessment of the implications of particular occupations for "a style of life and a place in the community status system" (Beardsley & O'Dowd, 1962, pp. 606-607). With respect to STUDENT BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS, the sociological literature on status attainment has demonstrated the necessity of including family socioeconomic status, academic aptitude or ability, and aspirations in studies of occupational attainment

because such background characteristics have been shown consistently to be related to outcomes (Alexander & Eckland, 1975; Hauser, Tsai, & Sewell, 1983). Astin (1977) also demonstrates the importance of including student background in studies of college impact.

The selection of conceptions for inclusion in the COLLEGIATE EXPERIENCE box is based largely on the work of Chickering (1969), who identifies six dimensions of college life that influence student development: 1) clarity and consistency of institutional objectives; 2) institutional size; 3) curriculum, teaching, and evaluation; 4) residence hall arrangements; 5) faculty and administration interaction with students; and 6) friends, groups, and student culture. Tinto's (1975, 1987) work suggests the importance of dividing NORMATIVE CONTEXTS into an "Academic" and a "Social" component. Further differentiation into a "Formal" and an "Informal" part is suggested by Sanford (1962, p. 40). The within-in box boundaries do not have solid lines because they are assumed to be rather fluid.

With respect to SOCIALIZATION PROCESSES, the large "pluses" are used to indicate that normative influences can be transmitted to students through several mechanisms. In the conceptual model of dropout from higher education developed by Tinto (1975), goal commitments, aspirations, and values held at entrance to post-secondary education are posited to affect students' academic performances (grades and intellectual development) and social life (peer group and faculty interactions) within the institution. Students' decisions to continue or drop out reflect the extent of their "Academic Integration" and "Social Integration" within the institution. This integration, in turn, influences subsequent institutional goal commitments as well as assessments of the personal importance of those commitments. Such subjective assessments of

experiences in college (e.g., satisfaction, fulfillment of expectations) may be said to reflect "Intrapersonal Processes" (Weidman & White, 1985).

Because typical educational institutions are not encapsulated environments, it is reasonable to assume that performance in college may be affected by the student's ability to cope with problems at home and other community settings (Weidman & Friedmann, 1984; Weidman & White, 1985; Bean & Metzner, 1985). Aitkin's (1982) finding that dropout among first-year college students is related to concern with "family/personal problems" also supports this extension of the framework, as does Tinto's (1982, p. 688) acknowledgement that his model did not ". . . seek to directly address the impact of financial stress or other forces external to the institution's immediate environment (e.g., external peer groups in an urban environment)." Hence, the present conceptual framework includes consideration of "Non-College Reference Groups." In addition, it includes "Parental Socialization" (Weidman, 1984) because it is assumed that such influences are present throughout the college years, even for those students who are independent householders.

In Figure 1, dotted lines appear around the two "Normative Pressure" boxes because they represent influences that tend to be either unmeasured or inaccurately measured in research on undergraduate socialization. Generally, this type of influence is inferred from patterns of joint covariation among variables constituting the college context. That is, inferences about the direction and intensity of normative pressures to which a student is exposed are based on observed relationships among characteristics of their collegiate experience and interpersonal linkages, especially interaction with faculty and peers and other types of participation in formal and informal aspects of college life. The model suggests that, in order to understand "Normative

Pressure" more fully, persisting influences of both "Parental Socialization" and "Non-College Reference Groups" must be taken into consideration.

Finally, the dimensions of the model shown in Figure 1 are assumed to be linked in a bi-directional, as opposed to a uni-directional, causal fashion. It is assumed that there is a reciprocity of influences on undergraduates such that, during the college years, various dimensions can have greater or lesser importance for socialization, depending upon the outcomes considered as well as both the particular stage of students' lives and of their undergraduate experience.

To summarize the general conceptual framework, undergraduates socialization can be conceived as a series of processes whereby the student: 1) enters college as a freshman with certain values, aspirations, and other personal goals; 2) is exposed to various socializing influences while attending college, including normative pressures exerted via a) social relationships with college faculty and peers, b) parental pressures, and c) involvement with non-college reference groups; 3) assesses the salience of the various normative pressures encountered for attaining personal goals that were held at college entrance. In the following sections, the dimensions of the framework are described in more detail. Specific attention is also paid to illustrating some of the more important linkages among dimensions.

Parental Socialization

Explicit in this framework is the recognition that the college campus does not, for most undergraduates, constitute a totally encapsulated environment. Parents, for example, influence the career preferences and orientations that students bring with them at college entrance (Winch & Gordon, 1974; Bengston, 1975). Furthermore, since the effects of parental socialization are

so very likely to persist during the course of the student's college years, parental pressures and expectations may serve to mediate the impact of college experiences. Consequently, if the susceptibility of students to the socializing influences of the campus environment is to be determined, it is also necessary to assess the importance of parent-child relationships. Two questions are suggested by this approach: How are various aspects of parental socialization and life-styles related to the persistance and change of undergraduates' orientations and preferences? How do aspects of the collegiate experience and parental socialization interact with one another in influencing the student during college?

In studies of career development, parental influences have been continuously identified as important contributing factors (Borow, 1966). Sociological research consistently shows that occupational attainment is related to such measures of parental social status as occupational prestige and educational attainment (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Alexander & Eckland, 1975). Other studies indicate that occupational values in work are associated with a middle social class position as measured by educational and occupational status, and that these values are transmitted by parents to their offspring (Kohn, 1977; Morgan, Alwin, & Griffin, 1979; Mortimer, 1974, 1976).

Parental influences appear to be somewhat more important for the pre-college socialization of black than white students. For black undergraduates, mothers tend to be very important influences of both college and career choices (Smith, 1981).

While there are strong correlations between such variables as parental life style and career orientations of college freshman (Weidman, 1984), and parental expectations for freshmen and college persistence (Bank, Slavings, &

Biddle, 1986), there is also evidence that parental influences decline in importance during college so that by senior year the correlations between parental characteristics and career choices are no longer significant (Weidman, 1984). This suggests an important temporal dimension to parental influence, with parents decreasing in importance, especially for those undergraduates who leave their parents' homes to attend college.

It should also be noted, however, that finding no significant parental influences on the career choices of college seniors (Weidman, 1984) may be an artifact of the measures used which were based on students' self reports of parental characteristics, expectations, and behavior. Recent studies (Davies & Kandel, 1981; Looker & Pineo, 1983) suggest that adolescents may systematically underestimate the importance of parental influences on aspirations. These authors demonstrate the importance of obtaining information about their attitudes and behavior directly from parents instead of relying solely on reports by adolescents of their parents' influence.

Non-College Reference Groups

In addition to relationships with parents, undergraduates are likely to maintain ties of various sorts to significant others outside the collegiate environment. In the case of non-traditional students, especially those older than their early twenties, there may be the competing demands of employers and the students' own families at home (i.e., spouses and children) as well (Simpson, 1979, Bean and Metzner, 1985; Weidman and White, 1985). There may also be ties to churches and community organizations that can shape responses to collegiate influences. The support of non-college significant others, including friends and other relatives (e.g., aunts and uncles, siblings, cousins, in-laws), is also important for older students who have to cope with

many competing expectations and, hence, are exposed to potentially conflicting normative pressures (Bean, 1985; Weidman & White, 1985).

Student Background Characteristics

Characteristics of individuals that tend to be correlated with specific types of outcomes must be included in any conceptualization of the undergraduate socialization process. The contribution of student background characteristics to understanding college impact is investigated in at least three primary sources of literature: a) research examining the broad spectrum of college effects on students (Feldman and Newcomb, 1969; Astin, 1977); b) research on dropouts from higher education (Tinto, 1975; Pantages and Creedon, 1978; Lenning, 1982; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1979; and Pascarella and Chapman, 1983); and c) research on the sociology of status attainment (Sewell, Haller, & Portes, 1969; Sewell, Haller, & Ohlendorf, 1970; Alexander & Eckland, 1975; Jencks, Crouse, & Mueser, 1983; and Hauser, Tsai, & Sewell, 1983). Figure 1 includes five examples of background characteristics which are not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather illustrate categories that appear frequently in research. Socio-economic status generally refers to the parents of the students and is most often measured by some combination of the parents' annual income, educational attainment, and occupational prestige (e.g., Duncan, 1961). Parent's education has been shown to exert a particularly strong influence on the college choices of black students (Litten, 1982).

Aptitude is an indicator of the student's academic ability and is most often measured by standardized test scores (e.g., SAT or ACT). Preferences, aspirations, and values held by students prior to college enrollment form the perspectives and expectations held by students prior to enrollment and shape their encounters with the higher education institution, especially early in

the undergraduate years. These orientations also may be shaped by the collegiate experience and subsequently shape post-college attainment. In fact, respondents to a large National Opinion Research Center sample of college graduates stated that their entering plans were a more important influence on ultimate career choice than their in-college grades (Spaeth & Greeley, 1970, pp. 171-172).

Pre-College Normative Pressure

Parental socialization, the influence of significant others who are not part of the collegiate environment, and students' background characteristics combine to become crucial determinants of the student's susceptibility to institutional influences early in college. This same combination also influences the patterns of coping that students use to meet the new demands of college. It is assumed that the student entering college as a freshman cannot be considered to be a "tabula rasa." Rather, prior experiences with family and significant others who are not members of the college community continue to generate normative pressures that shape students' expectations of and responses to their new environment.

Collegiate Experience

Socialization in college may be thought of a process that "entails a continuing interaction between the individual and those who seek to influence him" (Clausen, 1968, p. 3). Socialization, in this sense, "does imply that the individual is induced in some measure to conform willingly to the ways of . . . the particular groups to which he belongs" Clausen, 1968, p. 4). Undergraduate socialization can thus be viewed as a process that results from the student's interaction with other members of the college community in groups or other settings characterized by varying degrees of normative pressure.

This portion of the conceptual framework draws heavily from the seminal structural-functional analysis of American universities by Parsons and Platt (1973). Specifically, the framework focuses on two aspects of their argument as it relates to undergraduate socialization. One has to do with what they term the "moral authority of institutions" (Parsons & Platt, 1973, p. 167). This refers to the normative order (including its mission as well as normative expectations of faculty and staff for students) of the college or university as a potent agent of socialization. The various aspects of a collegiate institution's normative order may then be studied by identifying social contexts (e.g., colleges or particular college groups) that are characterized by especially strong expectations for students. In Chickering's (1969) terms, the greater the "clarity and consistency of objectives," the stronger the normative consensus among members of a particular institution, organizational unit, or group within the institution. The second aspect of the Parsons & Platt (1973) discussion has to do with interpersonal relationships among various members of academic settings. According to Parsons & Platt (1973), these interpersonal attachments make an important contribution to the members' social integration within the college.

Furthermore, interpersonal relationships contributing to the social integration of students into the academic system are related not only to the attainment of institutional goals but also to the personal goals of individual students (Tinto, 1975). Close, personal relationships among members of normative contexts contribute materially to the transmission and internalization of normative influences by members (Moore, 1969). Hence, in studying college student socialization, it is important to explore the impacts of normative contexts as well as the ways in which interpersonal relationships

among members serve to either reinforce or counteract the normative influences exerted within various specific contexts (Lacy, 1978).

Following Tinto (1975), Figure 1 divides NORMATIVE CONTEXTS into an ACADEMIC and a SOCIAL dimension. The academic dimension refers to those aspects of the collegiate environment that contribute explicitly to the fulfillment of educational objectives (as stated in the institutional mission), including such things as allocation of resources for an organization of instruction, and student selection in the admissions process. The social dimensions refers to the ways in which opportunities for interaction among members are organized and clustered within the institution. The academic and social dimensions are further subdivided into "formal" and "informal" components, as suggested by Sanford (1962, p. 49). Formal structures are those designed to achieve the various stated objectives of the organization, generally built around a system of written rules and procedures. Informal structures tend to evolve as individuals adapt their own personal needs and expectations to the demands of the formal structure. Informal structures are characteristically more fluid and organized according to implicit rather than explicit rules and procedures. To understand undergraduate socialization, both the formal and informal aspects of normative contexts need to be investigated along with their relationships to one another.

Normative Contexts: Academic

Institutional and within-institution program quality, though fraught with problems of definition and measurement (Conrad & Blackburn, 1985), continues to be of considerable interest to scholars, policy-makers, and consumers of higher education. The "frog-pond effect" (Davis, 1966; Reitz, 1975) suggests that college selectivity decreases students' preferences for

seeking educationally high-level careers, largely because the competition between highly able students is greater than in less selective institutions. Other studies (Bassis, 1977; Drew and Astin, 1972), however, found positive effects of selectivity on aspirations and self-evaluations.

More selective institutions tend also to emphasize providing students with a broad liberal education rather than being narrowly job focused, and thus are more likely to reflect normative pressures that encourage the development of values and aspirations that encompass broader facets of adult life (e.g., use of leisure time, cultural preferences, participation in community affairs) than simply career and income. Solmon and Wachtel (1975) found institutional quality as measured by levels of resource allocation to be positively associated with post-college career income. Institutional reputation or prestige, often used as the primary measure in studies of quality, has also been shown to be related to both college completion and access to elite careers (Kamens, 1974).

The mission of an institution of higher education provides the statement of institutional purpose that drives resource allocation and establishes educational objectives (Meyer, 1970, 1972). The mission provides a frame of reference for both the student in choosing a particular college and for other external constituencies, especially employers, interested in making judgments about the qualifications of graduates. Institutional mission may also be reflected in affiliation with a religious denomination. The nature of the socializing environment in religiously affiliated institutions can be characterized as follows:

> Studies have indicated that religious-affiliated colleges present the kind of setting that is most conducive to change

> of any sort. They are small, allowing for more personalized interaction of students and faculty. They have a higher degree of homogeneity in student social background than most colleges. They have a high degree of normative integration, and structural characteristics (residentiality) that support that integration (Anderson 1985, p. 323).

A particularly important locus of both faculty and peer influences on students is the academic department (Hearn, 1980; Hearn and Olzak, 1981; Weidman, 1979, 1984). Practically all post-freshmen students have some affiliation with an academic department, since it tends to be the organizational unit through which degree requirements are formulated and certification of their successful completion is made. Vreeland and Bidwell (1966, p. 238) assert that the department "has relatively well-defined goals and expectations for students, and commands powerful normative and utilitarian sanctions." These authors argue that the socializing impacts of the department are determined by the expressed goals of the faculty for undergraduate education, which, in turn, determine faculty behavior and expectations for students. They identify three areas of faculty emphasis or goals for undergraduate education: providing a broad, liberal education; providing occupational training; and mixed goals, where both are emphasized.

The academic department can be a powerful source of normative influences on student majors, in large part because of the faculty's ability to differentially reward students for their performance in courses, both through the assignment of grades and the encouragement of social interaction (Parsons and Platt, 1973, p. 179). Faculty evaluation of student's performances in class-related activities as well as in other settings can be a significant

influence on students' goals and aspirations. In fact, for influences on students' career orientations within the department, major field faculty appear to be more important than major field peers (Phelan, 1979; Weidman, 1984). This may vary, however, by the level of the student. Freshmen, for instance, appear to be more susceptible to peer than faculty influence (Bean, 1985; Bank, Slavings, & Biddle, 1986; Biddle, Bank & Slavings, 1986). As students pass through the college years faculty may become more salient agents of socialization. It is likely that faculty influence is strengthened by their increasing contribution to the process of anticipatory socialization for significant adult roles as students concentrate on work in their major fields (Weidman, 1984). There is also evidence that differences in the orientations of students across major fields actually become sharper during the college years, thus, suggesting that there are potent socializing influences exerted by major departments (Feldman & Weiler, 1976).

It is also important to remember that the department is part of a larger organization. Consequently, there may be socializing effects of interaction in nondepartmental settings within the college that either add an increment to or even cancel out the department's influences.

On the informal side, the "hidden curriculum" (Snyder, 1971) of higher education can also be a powerful source of influence on students. This refers to the unspoken and unwritten rules defining faculty expectations for students' academic performance. Do tests, for instance, actually reflect what faculty say is important? Similarly, it could also refer to the unwritten rules of academic behavior as well as to other informal norms about what is acceptable as defined by students (Becker, Geer, & Hughes, 1968).

Normative Contexts: Social

It is also important to differentiate membership groups from reference groups. For instance, it is inappropriate to assume that students from the same residence will necessarily constitute each other's reference group(s). In a classic study of college women, Siegel and Siegel (1957) manipulated choice of residence location by deliberately assigning subjects to non-preferred locations. The authors discovered that attitude change was greatest when subjects adopted " . . . the imposed, initially non-preferred membership group as their reference group" (Siegel & Siegel, 1957, p. 364).

Another important dimension here is the formal extra-curricular structure of the college. Presumably, those students who participate actively in extra-curricular activities may be more likely than their nonparticipant counterparts to look to peers or college staff who supervise the extra-curricular activities rather than to departmental faculty as normative referents. It is also possible that the norms held by the extra-curricular staff and peers differ from those held by departmental peers and faculty.

The spatial location, especially on- vs. off-campus, of reference groups can also affect their potential for socialization. The importance for socialization of participation in on-campus activities has been described by Vreeland and Bidwell (1965, p. 235) as contributing to the power of the college to influence students because ". . . the broader the scope of the student's involvement with the college, the more accessible he is to intervention and the more diverse the mechanisms that can be employed (especially mechanisms of indirect manipulation)." Consequently, limited student involvement with on-campus reference groups is likely to reduce the impact of normative pressures exerted by a college. This has clear implications for examining differential socialization in residential and commuter institutions

(Chickering, 1974; Pascarella, 1974) There is also a relationship between the social climate of a living group and members' academic performance (Schrager, 1986).

Socialization Processes: Interpersonal Interaction

An important determinant of the socialization potential of social relationships is the degree of intensity of feelings and other affective attachments between the people involved, namely, their sentiments (Homans, 1950, pp. 37-40). Another critical aspect of interaction is its frequency. The more frequently an individual interacts with specific others, the more he is exposed to their attitudes, values, and opinions. Furthermore, as Homans (1961, p. 182) argues, there is often a direct relationship between frequency of interaction with another person and liking that person. Homans (1961, p. 187) does not, however, assert this proposition without a qualification, which is that sentiments exchanged may be so negative that frequent interaction may lead to aversion rather than attraction between those involved. These notions of frequency and sentimental intensity of interaction are basic components underlying this conceptual framework. It is assumed that interaction involving frequent, primary relationships is more likely to have socializing impacts than interaction involving infrequent, impersonal relationships.

An emphasis on norms and social relationships in the academic department has been incorporated into this model for several reasons. First, primary social relationships have already been discussed as contributing to the social integration of and, consequently, to the potential normative pressure exerted on members by groups. Second, as Shibutani (1955) asserted, "socialization is a product of a gradual accumulation of experiences with certain people, particularly those with whom we stand in primary relations . . ." (p.

568). Finally, both students and faculty tend to feel that the most enduring academic impacts of college attendance result from social interaction between faculty and students outside the formal classroom setting (Thielens, 1966; Wilson, et al., 1975; Pascarella, 1980; Winteler, 1981). Availability of these opportunities may be a significant enhancer of collegiate influences on students.

Socialization Processes: Intrapersonal Processes

Another aspect of the student's collegiate experience included in this framework involves his or her subjective assessment of that experience. As one critic of the structural-functional interpretation of socialization has argued (Wrong, 1961), socialization encompasses both the transmission of norms and the individual processing of normative influences that result in the development of unique personal orientations to social contexts. Not surprisingly, there is a considerable literature dealing with the related phenomenon of "person-environment interaction" at college (Stern, 1970; Walsh, 1973; Moos, 1979). The general question raised by this approach is: How do the individual's perceptions of participation in various segments of the collegiate environment affect the socialization potential of the college? Put in a somewhat different way, the concern is with assessing whether or not favorable student attitudes about various aspects of the collegiate experience enhance the college's impact.

Several dimensions of students' perceptions of their colleges are of interest here. One is student satisfaction with college. In their extensive literature review, Feldman and Newcomb (1969, pp. 94-95) cited four studies of student satisfaction with college that suggest some variability in student satisfaction at different points during college. Sophomores reported the

lowest levels (60 percent satisfied) and seniors reported the highest levels (more than 80 percent satisfied). This suggests that seniors have accommodated themselves better to the demands and expectations of their college, quite possibly reflecting the socializing influence of the campus over time.

Another dimension that enhances the institution's socialization potential is the students' images of college, especially when they encompass subjective assessments of the college's contribution to the attainment of personal goals (Weidman and Krus, 1979).

Socialization Processes: Integration

The student's perceived "fit" or subjective assessment of his or her degree of social integration into the life of the institution is another dimension of interest in the conceptual framework. Tinto (1975) described social integration into campus life as being due primarily to interaction with college faculty, administration, and peers as well as participation in extracurricular activities. He suggested that these relationships resulted in varying degrees of student affiliation with the college "that modify his educational and institutional commitments" (Tinto, 1975, p. 107). There also continues to be a considerable amount of empirical research using Tinto's model (Ethington & Smart, 1986; Terenzini, et al., 1985; Terenzini & Wright, 1986; Fox, 1986; Nora, 1987).

Social integration, particularly as it relates to primary social relationships with faculty and peers in the transmission of normative influences has already been discussed. However, there are several other implications of social integration for student socialization. With respect to students' assessments of impersonal treatment on campus, the expectation is that the less favorable the student is in his or her perceptions of the

college environment, the less likely that student is to be socialized toward the norms of the college. In addition, students' subjective assessments concerning suitability for careers and their willingness to participate in the formal occupational structure of society are important. There is an expectation that those students who question their ability to develop meaningful careers will also shy away from aspiring to high-status, demanding occupations.

In-College Normative Pressure

An examination of the socializing effects of normative pressure, expressed as either change or reinforcement of values, and transmitted by departmental members through primary social relationships is of considerable importance. It should also be noted that, while change in student orientations is often an expected outcome, reinforcement of already present student orientations may just as legitimately be expected (Feldman, 1972). Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the absence of observed change as well as significant change during college because both may imply college impact.

This approach parallels the work of Vreeland and Bidwell (1966, pp. 241-242) who posit three conditions that contribute to socialization of students toward departmental norms: faculty interest in undergraduate teaching; student/faculty interaction measured on two dimensions, intimacy and frequency; and faculty and student norms that are "consistent and reinforcing." One way to determine faculty and student norms is to examine the goals of each for attaining such outcomes of a college education as vocational training, development of values, learning an academic discipline, intellectual enlightenment, or general education. The similarity between faculty and student educational goals can provide important information about the poten-

tial effect of faculty norms on either maintenance or change in students' incoming orientations.

Vreeland and Bidwell (1966, p. 254) suggest that the departmental faculty's collective conception of goals for undergraduate education conditions the faculty's conception of the instructional task. This, more than specific subject-matter content, determines the social organization of departmental student-faculty interaction. These authors systematize the structure of departmental faculty influence by dividing faculty goals for undergraduate education into two categories: technical and moral. Technical goals concern occupational preparation and the intellectual structure of an academic discipline. Moral goals concern the ethical practice of an occupation and the broadening or humanizing effects of education. According to this formulation, the expressed goals of faculty for undergraduate education determine faculty behavior and expectations which, in turn, determine the socializing effects of the department.

Concerning the direction of impact, Vreeland and Bidwell (1966) suggest that not only do different patterns of change occur as a function of faculty conceptions of the instructional process, but also that some values are more likely than others to be influenced by either technical or moral goals. Student value concerned with extrinsic rewards of occupational participation (income, status, recognition from colleagues) would be more likely to be influenced positively by technical rather than moral goals. Values concerned with individual creativity or interpersonal relationships, on the other hand, would be more amenable to positive influence by moral rather than technical goals.

Intensity of influence can refer both to the overall importance among

faculty of a particular goal and to the consistency of faculty sentiments, i.e., the extent of agreement among faculty on the goals for undergraduate instruction. Consequently, in assessing potential departmental impact, both the general importance of a particular instructional goal and the level of consensus among faculty on the goal's importance should be assessed. Vreeland and Bidwell (1966) classified academic departments at Harvard according to the degree of consensus among faculty on moral and technical goals. Departments having high faculty consensus on technical goals included physics, chemistry, Germanic and Slavic languages, engineering, music, mathematics, astronomy, psychology, and philosophy. Departments having high faculty consensus on moral goals included architectural science, classics, government, economics, history, and fine arts. Departments having low consensus because various faculty members held different goals included romance languages, biology, anthropology, English, geology, and social relations.

A different approach to the analysis of the normative pressures exerted in various academic departments is the Environment Assessment Technique (EAT) developed by Astin and Holland (1961; Astin, 1963; Holland, 1966). Taking research on the psychology of vocational choice as his basepoint, Holland (1966) developed a scheme classifying occupations in terms of six personality types: realistic, intellectual, social, conventional, enterprising, and artistic. Using these six modal types, Holland (1966, 1985) classified the normative pressures of major field environments according to the vocational preferences and personality orientations of the people in them. Some majors assigned to each of the types include the following: realistic-agriculture, industrial arts, engineering, and forestry; intellectual - mathematics, philosophy, physical science, and anthropology; social - education,

nursing, psychology, American civilization, sociology, and social work; conventional - accounting, economics, finance, and business education; enterprising - history, international relations, political science, industrial relations, business administration, and management; and artistic - art and music education, fine and applied arts, English and journalism, and foreign languages and literature.

The usefulness of Holland's classification has also been verified cross-culturally in a study of environments in both British and Canadian universities (Richards, 1974). More recently, Smart (1985) uses the Holland typology to study the extent to which major field environments reinforce students' values. He affirms the importance of focusing on organizationally and normatively well-defined units within the larger institution when studying college effects.

In the foregoing discussion of departmental climates, some general patterns appear that are useful in developing an understanding of undergraduate influence processes. Humanities departments tend to be populated by faculty and students who are concerned with intellectual activities, creative endeavors, and the development of values and ethical standards. Occupational value orientations among humanities majors tend to cluster in the area of intrinsic rewards rather than extrinsic rewards, with a moderate "people" orientation. Science and mathematics departments, while also high on members' intellectual orientations, are likely to be high on career orientation and occupational training as well. These areas will probably be relatively high on students' orientations toward both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, with relatively low "people" orientations. Compared with other science departments, engineering departments are likely to have students somewhat lower on

intrinsic reward orientation, somewhat higher on extrinsic reward orientation, and about the same on "people" orientation. Majors in the social sciences, particularly economics and political science, appear to have the highest extrinsic reward and people orientations, and the lowest intrinsic reward orientations. Faculty tend to be less favorably oriented to the pursuit of extrinsic rewards then students, especially in the humanities and social sciences where little direct occupational training is provided and large numbers of graduates enter occupations unrelated to their majors.

Socialization Outcomes

The outcomes listed in Figure 1 are a few of the more important ones that have been of continuing concern to higher education scholars, especially as they reflect outcomes that are important both for adult life following college and for their potential contribution to societal well-being (Davis, 1965; Spaeth & Greeley, 1970; Bowen, 1977). While the continuing interest in research on status attainment among sociologists has already been noted, there is also something of a resurgence of interest in the higher education literature that investigates the effects of colleges on occupational attainment (e.g., Smart & Pascarella, 1986; Smart, 1986).

Patterns and Trends

It could also be argued that the outcomes of undergraduate socialization during any particular time period are as much a function of the characteristics, values, and aspirations of the students as they are of the socialization processes that occur during college. Certainly, there is considerable documentation of the changes in career orientations over the past few decades, with a general increase in students' interest in obtaining specific occupational skills in college rather than a broad, liberal arts education (Hoge,

1976; Levine, 1980). While this trend holds for both sexes, women have made even greater changes in their career orientations then men, with women now aspiring to combine careers with marriage and family responsibilities (Regan & Roland, 1982). There are also rather different patterns of career socialization for women than for men (Eisenhart, 1985; Eccles, 1986) as well as rather different patterns of college experiences for minority students (Peterson, et al., 1978; Bressler & Wendell, 1980; Willie & Cunnigen, 1981; Thomas, 1981; Astin, 1982; Perun, 1982; Fox, 1986; Nettles, Thoeny, & Gosman, 1986; Nora, 1987). **[MORE DETAILED DISCUSSION IN PROGRESS]**

Persistence Over the Life Course

On another level, there is some limited evidence about the persistence of changes in values that occur during college. Interestingly, most of these studies have focused on political values and/or activities (Newcomb, et al., 1967; DeMartini, 1983; Wieder & Zimmerman, 1976; Fendrich, 1976). A key factor in the maintenance of political activism after college appears to the extent to which those views and behavior are supported by significant others, especially husbands of Bennington women (Newcomb, et al., 1967) and employers. A study of students who attended universities in one of the major centers of civil rights protest during the early 1960's posited the following explanation for the persistence of white student activism:

> Those adults who have remained free of the occupational commitments to money, status, and security continue to be political activists. Activists have pursued careers in work environments that either tolerate or encourage commitment to values different from the traditional extrinsic rewards (Fendrich, 1976, p. 96).

DeMartini (1983, p. 214), in reviewing seven studies of white activists also concludes that "maintenance of dissident political values is consistent with full integration into adult social roles." Black activists in the Fendrich (1976) study were similar to white activists in that those who valued extrinsic rewards the least were also more active in protest politics. The main racial difference was that black activism tended to focus almost exclusively on "the one-issue politics of advancing the race" (Fendrich, 1976, p. 97).

Finally, for those college activists whose fundamental values were learned from parents, the persistence of these values into adulthood can be construed to be an extension of the parental socialization process (DeMartini, 1983). In the case of more extreme behavior such as movement into the student counter-culture, students withdraw from participation in major conventional roles, often separating from both parents and college in favor of peer support (Wieder & Zimmerman, 1976).

## Discussion and Policy Implications

The emphasis in the foregoing has been on the conceptual aspects of the complex processes of undergraduate socialization. To test empirically the framework that has been developed would require that variables be identified and then operationalized so that they can be measured. While that responsibility lies with the researcher, interested readers can see Lenning (1982) or Endo & Bittner (1985) for long lists of potential variables and Pascarella (1985a) for a discussion of some of the measurement problems involved in operationalizing variables. In addition, appropriate statistical techniques would have to be chosen because the model represent multi-directional proces-

ses rather than uni-directional causality.

There is, however, one measurement concern of particular importance. Throughout the discussion, it has been emphasized that the characteristics of specific normative contexts should be related as directly as possible to the student, preferably by identifying a linking mechanism of socialization. One of the best examples of a study that accomplished this linking is the study of undergraduates at a small, midwestern, liberal arts college that was done by Wallace (1966). He used sociometric techniques to qualify each undergraduate's "interpersonal environment," aggregating the questionnaire responses from each individual on campus who was named as being a friend of the student. Large sample survey research is not, however, always amenable to such techniques, especially since confidentiality of responses is often of great concern. It may then be necessary to settle for more general measures of membership group attachments based on friendship or interaction not tied to specific individuals.

The research by Holland (1985) and Smart (1985) suggests very strongly that the distribution of majors within an institution is an important factor in shaping the pattern of influence exerted by the institution. Currently, as colleges jump on the bandwagon and expand majors in business and career-oriented technical fields, there are consequences for the normative pressure on students. When normative pressures gravitate against the liberal arts, the character of an institution can very well change. The framework presented here calls attention to the various normative pressures exerted by different types of majors.

There is also evidence suggesting that first institutional impressions, beginning with freshman orientation, are very important for the

anticipatory socialization of undergraduates (Pascarella, Terenzini, & Wolfle, 1986). Consequently, it is in the best interests of colleges to structure orientations in ways that maximize the development of student commitments to the institution, including providing an early opportunity for interaction with faculty.

Finally, the temptation should be resisted to assume that a framework dealing with affective dimensions of undergraduate socialization has no relevance for studies of the "value added" by college to cognitive knowledge and skills. In fact, academic learning can (and should) be reinforced by the sorts of participation in normative contexts that has been discussed. It is unfortunate that much of the current research on student academic learning relies on rather simplistic theories of student learning that tend to exclude the range of variables represented in the framework developed for this chapter.

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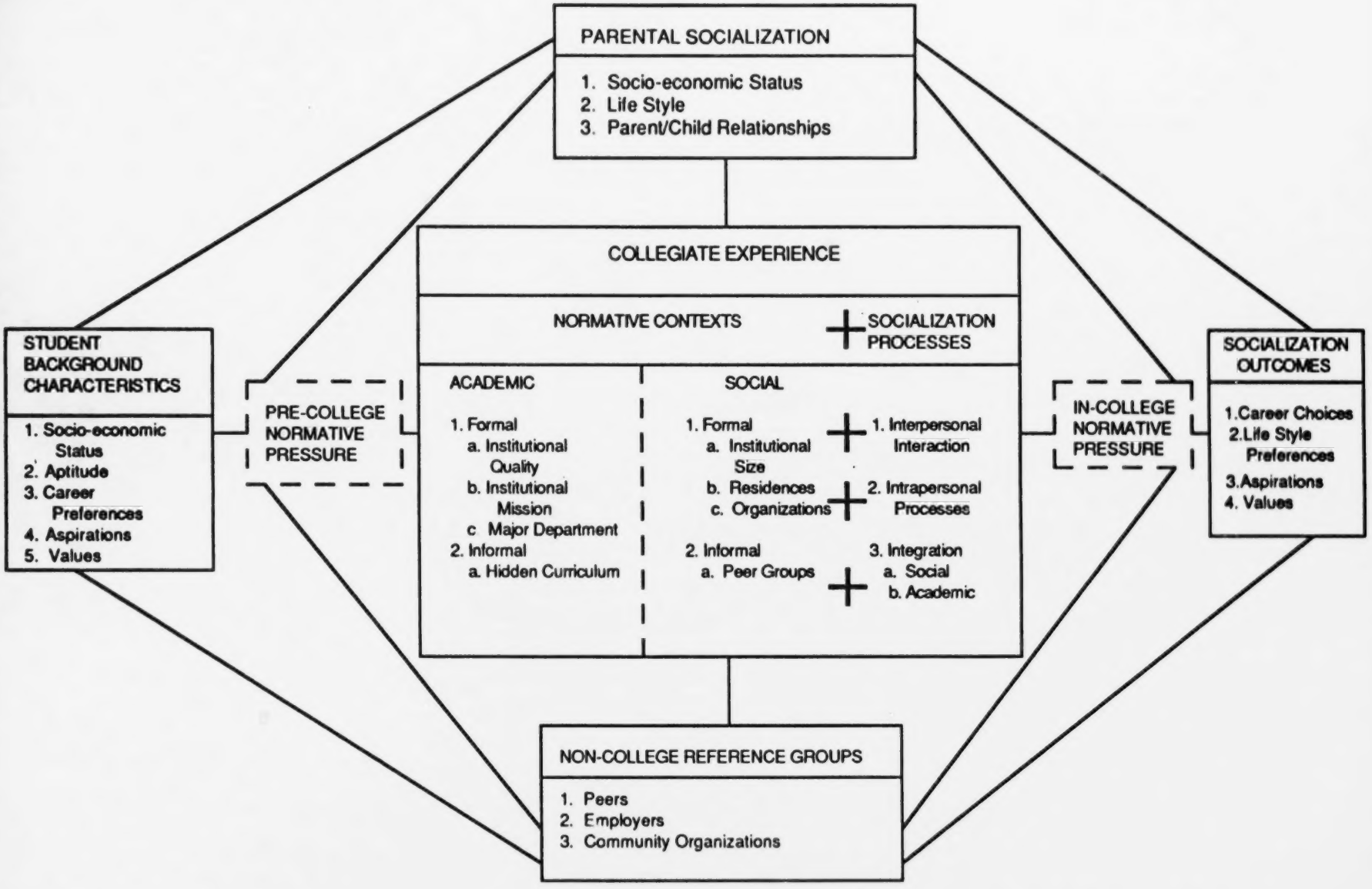






FIGURE 1. A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF UNDERGRADUATE SOCIALIZATION